

Corps establishes Joint Information Center for Missouri River Flooding

Omaha, Neb. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District, announced today that it has established a Joint Information Center to ensure timely and coordinated release of accurate information to the public by providing a single release point of information.

“As communities along the river experience unprecedented flows out of the Missouri River main stem reservoirs, we want to ensure they are provided with accurate and up-to-date information in a timely fashion,” said Erik Blechinger, Missouri River Joint Information Center Director.

The public can email questions to the Joint Information Center at MRJIC@usace.army.mil or call (402) 996-3877.

Record flows and flooding are the result of above-normal snowpack and extraordinary rain events during the last several weeks. Significant flooding in cities, towns and agricultural land is expected in North and South Dakota with many areas from Sioux City, Iowa, to the Mississippi rising above flood stage.

Flows from five of the six dams are expected to reach a record 150,000 cfs no later than mid-June. The previous record releases took place in the fall of 1997.

“We continue to receive precipitation in the upper basin,” said Jody Farhat, Chief of the Water Management Office here. “Each day we update the reservoir forecast with new rain and snow runoff information. When changes to the inflow forecasts occur, which they often do, it is necessary for us to make adjustments to the come-up schedules at the mainstem reservoirs to balance the impacts of changing conditions.”

“The sooner we reach these maximum release rates, the less risk there is that we’ll have to go higher. Once we have evacuated some storage in the reservoir system, we will have more flexibility to respond to changing conditions,” said Farhat.

“Protecting lives is our number one priority right now,” said Brig. Gen. John McMahon, Commander of the Northwestern Division of the Army Corps of Engineers. “We are working closely with state and local emergency management teams to identify potential flood areas, provide residents with the most current information and help protect vital public infrastructure.”

People living along the river are encouraged to make evacuation plans to protect their possessions and property. Maps for potential flood areas can be found at: www.nwo.usace.army.mil < <http://USACEARMY.pr-optout.com/Url.aspx?520028x528838x503404> . Residents in communities along the river are encouraged to contact their local emergency management offices for additional details.

Flooded areas are expected to be inundated for several months.

“Moving water out of the reservoirs is essential,” said General McMahon. “Our release plan is based on the rain we’ve already received and that which is forecast for the next 5 days and the snow melt forecast. More heavy rain storms could cause major revisions.”

“Due to our vigilant dam safety program, all dams are well prepared to handle the onslaught of floodwaters,” said McMahon. “This is what these reservoirs were designed to do. They are inspected and maintained on rigid schedules. Our dams are sound.”

“State and local emergency management teams will be the point of contact for residents needing information about flooding in their area,” said Kim Thomas, Chief of the Emergency Management Office here at the Corps. Below are contact Web sites and phone numbers.

State Emergency Contact Numbers

These Web sites and phone numbers are also available on Corps Facebook page (www.facebook.com/OmahaUSACE) under the State, County and Local agencies tab.

- **Iowa**
 - www.iowahomelandsecurity.org
 - 515.725.3231
- **Montana**
 - dma.mt.gov/des
 - 406.324.4777
- **Nebraska**
 - www.nema.ne.gov
 - **24-hour operations - 402. 471.7421**
 - 24-hour emergency - 402.499.1219
 - 24-hour emergency - 402.499.1227
 - State EOC - 877.297.2368
- **North Dakota**
 - www.nd.gov/des
 - 701.328.8100
 - 800.773.3259
- **South Dakota**
 - www.breadysd.com
 - 605.773.3231
 - 877.579.0015
- **Wyoming**
 - wyohomelandsecurity.state.wy.us
 - 307.777.4663 (HOME)

Please follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/OmahaUSACE) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/OmahaUSACE) for the latest updates regarding our flood response operations.

You can also find flood inundation maps and local emergency management contact information on our social media sites as well as our district Web site at <http://www.nwo.usace.army.mil> .

View daily and forecasted reservoir and river information on the Water Management section of the Northwestern Division homepage at: <http://www.nwd-mr.usace.army.mil/rcc> .

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